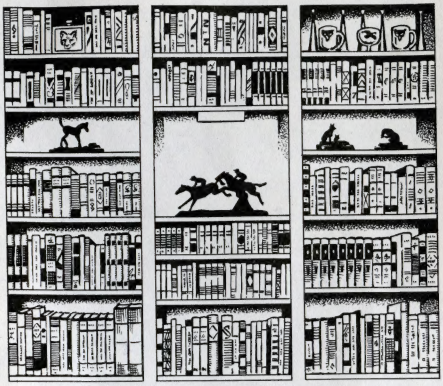

Ex Libris
JOHN AND MARTHA DANIELS

Buſineſs *and* Diverſion
inoffenſive to God, *and neceſſary for the Comfort and Support of human Society.*

A

DISCOURSE

utter'd in Part

AT

Ammauſkeeg-Falls,

IN THE

Fiſhing-Seaſon.

1739.

Deep in the Vale old *Moniack* rolls his Tides,
Romantick Proſpects crown his reverend Sides;
Now thro' wild Grotts, and pendent Woods he ſtrays,
And raviſh'd at the Sight, his Courſe delays.
Silent and calm---now with impetuous Shock
Pours his ſwift Torrent down the ſteepy Rock;
The tumbling Waves thro' airy Channels flow,
And loudly roaring, ſmoke and foam below.

I. W.

Boston, Printed for S. Kneeland and T. Green in Queen-Street. Mdccxliii.

To the Honourable

Theodore Atkinſon, Eſq;

And Other

The Worthy Patrons of the Fiſhing

At

AMMAUSKEEG.

Gentlemen,

IT'S not to ſignify to others that I pretend to an Intimacy with you, or that I ever had a Share in thoſe pleaſant Diverſions, which you have innocently indulged your ſelves in, at the Place where I have taken an annual Tour for ſome Years paſt. Yet I doubt not but you'l Patronize my Intention, which is to fence againſt Bigottry and Superſtition. All Exceſs I diſclaim, but pretend to be a Favourer of Religion, and of Labour as an Ingredient, and of Recreation as a neceſſary Attendant.

I believe the *Gentleman* who moved me to preach there in ſome odd Circumſtances, and thoſe at whoſe Deſire and Charge this Diſcourſe is Printed, (asking their Pardon if my Suggeſtion appear to them ungrounded) were moved more from the uncommonneſs of the Thing, than any Thing ſingular in it. I have put off the Importunity for near theſe three Years; but leaſt it ſhould be, that I fear, it's being ſeen by the World, I ſubmit it to Sight and Cenſure.

So little as I know you, *Gentlemen*, I heartily preſent it to you; tho' all the Reaſon that I intend to offer is, we have fiſhed upon the ſame Banks: And tho' I know this will be no Bait, I am fond of being eſteemed, in the Affair of Fiſhing,

Gentlemen,

your moſt Obedient

and very humble Servant,

Fluviatulis Piſcator.

Buſineſs *and* Diverſion *inoffenſive to* GOD.

JOHN XXI. iii.

Simon Peter ſaith unto them, I go a Fiſhing.

'TIS an odd and vicious Conceit of the Superſtitious, who in Popiſh Countries are called the Religious; that a ſolitary Sequeſtration from the ſocial Affairs and Duties of Life, afford a mighty Advantage to Religion: For this is contrary to the Deſign of the Creator in the Make and Conſtitution of Man; oppoſite to the Providence and Precepts of God, and the Examples of holy Men recorded in ſacred Hiſtory. The Inſtance in our Text ſhows that *Buſineſs*, † or I think Diverſion in proper Portions of Time, and other ſuitable Circumſtances, are not hurtful, but very friendly to Religion.

† *For their ſtated Buſineſs, was to preach the Goſpel; tho' Fiſhing had been their Employment.*

The

The Apoſtles were conſtituted Fiſhers of Men, to allure and draw Souls to Chriſt, from a Pit of Sin and Miſery, to an Ocean of Piety and Pleaſure. -----An high and really religious Employment! And *our Lord* gave them a *Vacancy*, with Reſtriction, *but tarry ye at Jeruſalem.* They had been commiſſioned long before, [*Matth.* x. 17 and *Luke* ix.] but before they were to enter upon their Enterprize, in which he ſhould be corporally abſent, they muſt have a Leiſure refreſhing Seaſon. To what ſhould they in Reaſon have devoted this Intermiſſion, but Faſting and Mourning, for now the Bridegroom was not always with them? Why, *Obedience is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken, than the Fat of Rams*, 1 Sam. xv. 22. He who beſt knew the Nature of Man, before he was to ſend Men upon extraordinary Buſineſs, would give them Leiſure; nor was this Space confined wholly to Devotion. Some of it, we find, was ſpent in Buſineſs or Diverſion. Certainly theſe Saints were as ſincerely and piouſly affected to God, as the ſuperſtitious Biggots to Popery can, with any Shew of Modeſty, pretend to be; yet they divert themſelves in ſo ſuitable a Seaſon, and our Lord not only appoints the Leiſure, but ſupports them in it; by giving them a lucky Draught of Fiſhes. This ſacred Story leads me to think,

I. In the general, that the common Enterprizes of Life are not inconſiſtent with Piety towards God: But that infinite Holineſs may be pleaſed with them. And in particular, that

II. Fiſhing is innocent as Buſineſs or Diverſion.

Some may think it ſtrange that I give myſelf the Trouble to illuſtrate theſe Things, which, to them appear level to the loweſt Capacity.

But all Men are not of the ſame Caſt or Conſtitution. A Propoſition which is eaſy and evident to one, may be as doubtful and difficult to another; and its no uncommon Caſe, for Men who have no higher End in their Employments, and have been unſeaſonable, unguarded and irregular in their Diverſions, and have no higher End than Self, if they are convinced of their Idolatry and Carnality, to exclaim againſt the World! Then, when they moſt of all need to be diligent in ſome good Employment, Diligence is termed Worldly-mindedneſs; ſeaſonably and temperately to recreate themſelves, is carnal Pleaſure.

Pleaſure. Theſe Difficulties require no great Depth of Tho't, nor a Multitude of Words for their Solution.

We may, in an eaſy and natural Manner, conſider that Religion is all of a Piece, and one Duty does not deſtroy another. That Buſineſs and Diverſion, in their proper Place and Time, determined from a good Principle, and performed piouſly and prudently; are ſo far from being offenſive, that they are a neceſſary Branch of our holy Religion.

Let us then in the general conſider, *Whether the common Enterprizes of human Life, be conſiſtent with practical Piety.*

Here we muſt tell what we mean, by the common Enterprizes of Life. And we renounce all unjuſt and diſhoneſt Methods of obtaining the Riches, Honours, and Pleaſures of the World: And all unlawful Games, and thoſe which are lawful, when they are unſuitably and irregularly managed.

We conſider Buſineſs or Diverſions, as human Underſtandings. By Buſineſs, we mean our ſtated Exerciſes, or that which we ought to employ moſt of our Time in, and moſt of our Thoughts about. Diverſion is the turning aſide from Buſineſs, in ſome proper Period, to refreſh ourſelves, and fit us for a more chearful and lively Diſcharge of Duty. Now, if it ſhould be made evident, that theſe are Parts of our Duty to God, I ſuppoſe they muſt be conſiſtent with real Religion. And this will appear, if we conſider, That God is an active Being, and propoſes himſelf as our Pattern. It's not only contrary to Scripture, and deep thinking, but common Senſe, to ſuppoſe the great Creator and Governour of all Worlds, idle and unactive. Every one conceives ſomething of his Operation, as the Over-ruler of human Affairs, or Author of all Things. And if God be Agent, he expects thoſe to be ſuch who are capable of acting: And as he is perfect, and muſt act in a moſt excellent Manner, according to his own Nature, he muſt expect and require his Creatures to act according to the Power with which he has endowed them. And as he has endowed Man with a Capacity of knowing ſomething of him, he muſt deſign his imitating of him in his Meaſure and Degree. In this the Image of God in Man conſiſts. And we are to imitate him in Labour and Reſt, as well as in other Reſpects. This will be clear to you, if you recollect the Fourth Commandment:

mandment: *Six Days* ſhalt *thou* Labour, for in ſix---- *the Lord made*-----and *reſted* on the ſeventh, *&c.*

Indeed, no Man was made for Time, but Time for him: And as God uſes Eternity for his own Glory, according to his infinite Wiſdom and Power; ſo he expects Man ſhould ſpend his Time, according to his Capacity------.

Man's Capacity is the Meaſure of his Duty, and the Nature of Man requires Reſt and Labour, and a prudent Interchange and Succeſſion of each. We were not obliged to do, in our Original, thoſe Things which our Species were not capable of performing: But the Limitation of Nature was a Bound by the Deity, *So far ſhalt thou come, and no farther.* The Stretch of a human Mind, and the Strength of Man's Body, is limited by the ſupream Diſpoſer of all Things. And the ſame *Being*, in limiting our Capacity, makes out ourDuty, by our Make and Frame, and caſual Circumſtances in the Courſe of his divine Providence, he ſhews a wiſe Man what he ought to do, and what to avoid, and how he ſhould direct, guide, and govern himſelf or others. No mere Man ever could, nor will any Man that has the Government of himſelf, pretend to keep up an uninterrupted Series of Idleneſs and Indolence, of Labour or Devotion; for Experience muſt ſoon convince them that Man's Nature is formed for Variety: He is a changeable Creature, and is ſupported by Change. So Man at firſt was put into the Garden of Pleaſure, not only to ſerve his Maker, in his Devotions, and delight himſelf by his Senſations, but *to dreſs it and to keep it*: For in his primitive *Make* he needed thoſe Changes.

And we need them much more in our lapſed State: As all the Works of God, in Nature and Revelation, manifeſtly declare. Let thoſe who would form to their Imagination, a beautiful Deſcription of the Original of the World, read Dr. *Burnet*: But I muſt confine myſelf to Scripture, and the common Current of ourExperience,in the preſentState of Things; and as to that original State of the World, you will excuſe me if I ſay little about it, becauſe we have little to do with it. But if we gaze upon Nature, in it's preſent Situation, we ſhall find, that every Thing calls for a prudent Alloy of Labour and Diverſion: [Tho' I muſt rejoin, becauſe I would not be wanting in Caution, by Labour, I would be underſtood to mean,

mean, our Actions in our particular Callings; and by our Diversions, our turning aside from them, whether in the prescribed scriptural or rational Acknowledgements of the Deity, or our innocent unbending the Bow in those lawful Amusements, which are more commonly called Diversions. The Reason of my thus speaking is on the Account of the *divine Division. Six Days shalt thou Labour. But on the Seventh* ----. God who best knew our Capacities, has delineated our Business [or that which we are Statedly to employ most of our Time in, for that I call, must call so] *God* confirms the Division both by Precept and Example: And if we throw off Superstition and allow our selves to think freely we shall be confirmed that Business is Part of our Religion.]

To return then,

Let us consider the Universe in its present State and Situation. All the heavenly Bodies keep their Course, [but their Orbits are more or less Excentric] The rising SUN calls Man forth to his Business. The *Sun* withdraws, and lengthning Shades forewarn us of the rising Damp, and unhealthy Vapour; and bid us retire for Rest and Shelter. Yet if something uncommon, call us longer abroad, the *Moon* and *Stars* will lend a little of their *borrowed* Light; but amphibious Creatures, Birds and Beasts of Prey, oft check our Improvidence or Negligence. The Sun gives us our longest Days when the Earth requires most of our Labour, and when she refuses Produce, he shortens our Hours of Business.

So the vast Collection of Waters sometimes heaves in its briny Billow, swells every Bay, and rushes with Joy tho' every Channel; as from an Engine played by the Almighty Arm; then sinks into her deep Caverns, leaves Room for the Return of the rapid Rivers; with vast Additions from in-land Oceans.

The Winds also take their turns for Labour and Rest. The laborious East sends gently in the vast Magazines of floating Wealth, to the favourite Sons of Fortune; while he is gathering up the scattering Clouds, which he shoves in upon the craving Land, and genreously pours down a more universal Blessing: and retires, when the brisk West opens a Glene, scatters the broken Cloud, and sweeps up the redundant Moisture ****.

So the Earth *here* raises a rocky Mountain with a frowning Front; and levels *there* a pleasant Plain; *here* sinks a rushy

Fen, *there* raiſes a fertile Field: *Here* the ſtruggling Streams ruſh down a rapid River, *there* the eaſy Waters lye ſtill and move not ----. But what in Nature does not? Every Thing calls for Labour, and Labour requires Reſt.

Theſe uncultivated Lands call for hard Labour, but ſome other Circumſtances admit of Diverſion; for this the half tam'd *Deer* graze your Plains, and the rough *Bear* infeſt domeſtick Folds. The ingenious Dr. *Woodward* has ſhown what Convulſions there were at the Time of the Deluge, and how Sterile the Earth is made by that awful Event; and this to make us Labour, becauſe our ſinful Propenſity required it †

But we are ſocial Creatures; and the Cord of Society is ſtrengthned by Induſtry. In this defective State, great Diligence is neceſſary in Education, in Purging out Prejudices, Infuſing Principles and Maxims of Wiſdom; and acquiring Habits of juſt Reaſoning, and prudent Determining in every Occurrence. It's needful that ſome ſhould make a Buſineſs of Teaching; and the Labour of others muſt Support ſuch in their Labour.

Government is neceſſary to good Order; to ſecure our Lives, Property and Peace: And thoſe who are by divine Providence, ſet in Authority over us, ſhould be eſteemed and honoured; that they may be ſo, they ſhould be ſet above Contempt, by a generous

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† Speaking of the old World, he ſays that after the Fall of Man, "Theſe exuberant Productions of the Earth became a continual Decay and Snare to him, they only excited and fomented his Luſts, and miniſtred Fuel to his Vices and Luxury, and the Earth requiring little or no Tillage, there was little Occaſion for Labour, ſo that almoſt the whole Time lay upon his Hand, and gave him Lieſure to contrive; and full Swing to purſue his Follies; and the Pravity of humane Nature was ---- The Pravity of humane Nature is not, I fear, leſs yet then it was then-- And to remove the Temptation and Cauſe of the Sin, he brought this Change, by mingling and confounding its firſt conſtituent Principles --- That by this Means a great Part of their Time might be taken up, *&c.*

See his natural Hiſtory, Ed. *1ſt.* Pag. 89, *to* 114.

generous Support from the Society whom they ſerve: which it never can do unleſs Induſtrious.

Seeing we are to conſider GOD, not only as Creator of Man, but as the Founder of Society, and it muſt follow that a ſocial Homage is his Due; and this Homage muſt be paid in the beſt, the moſt regular and rational manner: It appears by the Light of Nature, and Suffrage of all Nations, that there ſhould be ſome Perſons ſtated and appointed to lead Societies in their Devotions; to keep the Knowledge of God, and our Duty to him, clear from all Confuſions and unworthy Conceptions, and to excite religious Sentiments *&c.* This requires the Labour and Study of ſuch Perſons, and the Labour of others to ſupport them. So that unleſs we would have Ignorance and Irreligion, and all Manner of Miſeries and Miſchiefs infeſt Mankind, we muſt labour; and as God is the Author of the Species, and Founder of our State, this Induſtry ſhould be practiſed with a View to his Glory, as Part of our holy Religion.

This Thought includes Piety, Juſtice, and Charity. We muſt be diligent in ſome lawful Calling, becauſe God requires it, as mere Reaſon ſhews, ſo doth the Scriptures.

Thoſe who will take no Method for their own Support, rob Society, or murder themſelves: If a Man provide not for himſelf, he either ſtarves or pillages his Neighbour: I can call it nothing leſs than Robbery, if he could, by any lawful Buſineſs, have ſupported himſelf; for he is as really a Villain, who, without my knowing it, picks my Pocket, as he who ſternly ſays, *Stand and Deliver!* And whatever I am obliged by Authority to pay towards the Support of Religion, Government, or the Poor, more than I ſhould or ought to have done, if my Neighbour had been induſtrious, they really rob me of; for I have ſo much leſs of Eſtate thro' their Negligence. -----The Equity of that Precept is clear, *He that will not work, neither let him eat.* And it's as evidently juſt, he that will not labour to ſupport Government, forfeits it's Protection and Favour.

The Man who will not labour, often thinks himſelf forced to lie long in his Neighbour's Debt; which is a great Piece of Injuſtice to his Neighbour and to Society: Seeing if his induſtrious Neighbour had his Money in his Hand, he would have turn'd it to the Increaſe of his Eſtate, and Emolument of the

Community. It's thro'Idleneſs that Men have little to diſpoſe of, and are tempted to aſk ſuch exorbitant Prices for their Wares. *

The Original of Communities, are Families. In theſe are weak and feeble Members, who needLabour for their Support: And that Man is not only unjuſt, but barbarous and cruel, who neglects them. *He that provideth not for his own, eſpecially for thoſe of his own Houſe, hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel.*

We ought to labour from a Principle of Charity, *That we may have to give to him that needeth.* § -----*The Poor ye have with you always.* ‡ If the Poor periſh thro' your Want, when you might have had it to give; it's as much thro' your Neglect, as if you had it, and refuſed to help and relieve them.

Indeed the moſt kind and prudent Way of relieving the Poor, is by ſetting them to work, if they are able. For hereby you give them Courage, cauſe them to be prudent and frugal; and prevent much Sin. It does not put them to ſo much Pain, to aſk for that for which they have laboured: And what they earn hardly, they will not be ſo likely to ſpend idly. While they have Employ, they may be kept from making Miſchief among Neighbours, from *wandering about from Houſe to Houſe as Buſy-Bodies.* †

If

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* There has been long and tedious Diſputes about a Medium of Trade, and a ſad Complaint of the conſtant Falling of Money: While the Prices of the Produce of theCountry are under no Regulation by Law: Every one almoſt will make it a Rule, *to ſell as dear as he can*: And if they aſk an *Angel* this Year, for that which might have been purchaſed with a *Crown* laſt, an Angel is worth no more now than a Crown was then; and Money muſt continue falling. It's worthy the Tho't of conſiderate Men, whether a Want of Labourers be not at the Bottom of all this. If Men don't labour, they vainly complain of hard Times, and Scarcity of Money; for they have nothing to procure it.

§ Eph. iv. 28. ‡ Matth. xxvi. 11.

† In

If ye ſhall fulfill the royal Law, according to the Scriptures ----thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf, ye ſhall do well. If a Brother or a Siſter be naked, or deſtitute of daily Food, and one of you ſay to them, Depart in Peace, be you warmed and filled, notwithſtanding you give them not of thoſe Things that are needful to the Body, What doth it? But can common Chriſtians feed their Neighbours with any thing better than fair Words unleſs they be diligent in their Buſineſs.

Queſt. *Theſe are evident, you may ſay, but how do they reach the Rich?*

The Rich are of the ſame Nature with the Poor, and ſtand in as near Relation to God and Society as they: And in theſe Reſpects, have as much need of Buſineſs. Tho' Men have ever ſo much Wealth, they ſhould conſider that Idleneſs and Inactivity ruſts and depraves the Mind, and renders it unfit for the Service of God or Men. It either diſtempers the Brain with Melancholly, or fills the Body with ill Humours, and the Mind with vicious Inclinations; and either of them give Satan great Advantage againſt us. Beſides --- we are to conſider Wealth as a Talent given us by God to improve, therefore the more any Man has, the more he has to turn to Advantage, which muſt proportionably encreaſe Care and enlarge the Sphere of Action. He that ſinks his Eſtate thro' Indolence robs the Publick, for he cant do ſo much for the Commonwealth. And if he only keeps the Principal, and endeavours to make no Intereſt, he is an *unprofitable Servant* to God who intruſts him, and to the Society who protects him.

Reflection. If we are to be Followers of God as dear Children; if God is an Agent; if we are to imitate him in labouring ſix Parts in ſeven of our Time; if the human Conſtitution in its Original requires Change of Labour and Reſt; if this is the State of all Nature; if Piety to God, and Juſtice and Charity to Men require Labour;

† In the beſt regulated Communities, they keep all employ'd, young and old, ſtrong and weak; thoſe who are ſtrong to more onerous Service, and the more feeble to that which is leſs burthenſome, *&c.* *See Sir* WILL. TEMPLE *of* Holland, *and* BUSBEG; *Juci. Epiſt.* RICHELIEU's *Pol. Will.* Chap. IX. Sect. vi.

bour ; and Buſineſs cannot be perform'd to Advantage without ſome ſeaſonable prudent and regular Diverſion : How wild and ſuperſtitious are thoſe who would drive Perſons into Monaſtries and Nunneries, under the Notion of their ſpending their whole Time in Devotion ? And how much better is it for Perſons who are deeply in Debt, or dependent on Charity for their daily Support, to run about under the Notion of dealing with their Neighours in ſome pretended Caſe of Conſcience, prating about Things *which they underſtand not* ; than ſtudy to be quiet and *do their own Buſineſs !*

Extraordinary Religion is the moſt exact Tranſcript of the communicable Attributes of God ; and the neareſt Imitation of the divine Being, as far as the Dictates and Limits of our Nature, and the Rules of his holy Word. ----- They who are wiſe above what is written, will ſoon diſcover their Folly : For when Superſtition has overwhelmed a Man's Brain, like a Child with the Rickets, his Head grows too big for his Body, and the diſtempered Creature ſoon dwindles away to nothing. For Men in vain plead for ſuch Devotion as robs Society, ſuch as defrauds Mankind. ------ *He that loves not his Brother whom he hath ſeen, how ſhall he love God whom he hath not ſeen.*

Weak Perſons are apt to ſay, Can we do too much for God ? Can we ſpend too much Time in Religion ? No, you cannot. But you may diſobey God, when you think you obey him : You may do what he forbids, when you think you do what he requires. You may be idolatrous, when you think you are mighty devout. Why, your Anceſtors tho't this might be ; Why elſe did they reject the exorbitant Number of popiſh Faſt and Feſtivals, *&c.* ? In one Century you ſeem to have forgot your Errand to *America*. And what do you think of thoſe *Iſraelites*, who ſacrificed their Children, *&c.* ? Do you think that they could do too much for God ? Could they do any more than to give the Firſt-born of their Bodies for the Sin of their Souls ? Who could blame them, if none can do too much [in the common Senſe] ? If a Man were to murder his Father or Mother, his Wife or Children, or himſelf, under the Notion of being extraordinary religious, and ſhould ſay, who can do too much for God, would you not think the poor Creature were delirious ? Why, *He that loves not his Brother is a Murderer !* Many make a great Talk of Matters of Faith, or rather of Opinion, and will go prating from Place

to

to Place, * and take little or no Care of their Families; they are mighty religious, but if it were poſſible they would not pay a Farthing for the Support of the Government, (by which our Lives are preſerved) or of Religion, or for the Education of their Children. They like Holidays extreamly, and might be glad if every Day were ſuch; but can, with a good Conſcience, lie in Debt from Year to Year. It's an eaſy Matter to pray, and read, and hear, and talk devoutly; but to work is hard, 'tis tedious to the poor Carcaſs, a Wearineſs to the Fleſh! It's an eaſy Matter to run down your induſtrious Neighbour as a worldly Man, but have you paid him that which you owed him? Is not he forc'd, in great Part, to ſupport your Family?

I wiſh Men would know what Religion is in the Whole, and not ſet the ſeveral Parts of it at Variance, and make one Branch militate with another. *Let us love God with all our Hearts*, and at the ſame Time remember that we are to *love our Neighbour as ourſelves*.

Let us meditate on and long after Heaven; but know at the ſame Time, that our Way thither is thro' the Earth: That the Soul is infinitely the ſuperiour Part, but if we murder the Body, the Soul muſt eternally be damned. Let us be frequent at Church, yet not forget that we have ſomething to do at Home. Let's be ſerious and ſteady in our Devotions, and likewiſe diligently follow our Buſineſs. In ſhort, Let every Command have its proper Weight with us, every Duty it's Proportion of our Time and Tho'ts.

Buſineſs and Diverſion, in the general, may be allowed as innocent and neceſſary. But ſome Enterprizes which wear that Name may be ſcrupled. We may therefore enquire in particular,

II. *Whether*

* I wiſh there were not too much Reaſon for Complaint in this Regard, at this Day. I have been often ſurprized, not only at the prophane Railing againſt Lectures, but at the Abſurdity and Folly of many, who had hardly a Morſel of Meat to put into their Mouths, and their Children near famiſhing, and all their Buſineſs ruining, on Account of their violent and furious rambling here and there on the Notion of ſome religious Errand; as if God would call them to a Fraud and Barbarity, which, the Apoſtle tells us, is worſe than Infidelity, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8.

II. *Whether Fiſhing is lawful as Buſineſs or Diverſion.*

Not only thoſe called Religious, among the *Turks* and *Perſians*, and the *Benjans*, &c. have ſcrupled eating of Fleſh or Fiſh, but ſome among ourſelves, fear whether we ought to take away the Lives of Creatures for our own Support; and are poſitive that we ſhould not for Diverſion. Many have a great Averſion to thoſe whoſe Trade it is to take away the Lives of the lower Species of Creatures. A Butcher is (in their Apprehenſion) a mere Monſter, and a Fiſherman, a filthy Wretch.

It's an ancient Obſervation, that *a merciful Man is merciful to his Beaſt. The righteous Man regards the Life of his Beaſt*, Prov. xii. 10. Where any have long uſed any Creature, the Tho't of it's Service, and ſome ſort of Regard contracted to it thereby, is not eaſily conquered. But a noble generous Soul hates Barbarity to foreign as well as domeſtick Creatures. "It's not certain [ſays my Lord BEACON] that the wor-"thier any Soul is, the larger is it's Compaſſion. For con-"tracted degenerate Minds imagine that thoſe Things belong "not to them: But the Mind that looks upon itſelf as a "nobler Portion of the Univerſe, is kindly affected towards "inferiour Creatures-----."

He that takes Pleaſure in the Pains and dying Agonies of any lower Species of Creatures, is either a ſtupid ſordid Soul, or a Murderer in Heart.-----He that delighteth to ſee a Brute die, would ſoon take as great Pleaſure in the Death of a Man.

But here, *in Fiſhing*, we are ſo far from delighting to ſee our Fellow-Creature die, that we hardly think whether they live----- We have no more of a murderous Tho't in taking them, than in cutting up a Meſs of Herbage. We are taking ſomething, which God, the Creator and Proprietor of all, has given us to uſe for Food, as freely as the *green Herb*. Gen. ix. 2, 3.

He allows the eating them, therefore the mere catching them is no Barbarity. Beſides God ſeems to have carv'd out theGlobe on purpoſe for a univerſalSupply: InSeas,nearShores, are Banks and Beds made for them; ------to furniſh the Lands adjacent-----and Lands which lye remote, are more divided into Lakes and Ponds, Brooks and Rivers; and he has implanted in ſeveral Sorts of Fiſh, a ſtrongInſtinct [or Inclination] to ſwim up theſe Rivers a vaſt Diſtance from the Sea. And

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is it not remarkable, that Rivers most incumbred with Falls, are ever more full of Fish than others. Why are they directed here? Why retarded by these difficult Passages? But to supply the Inlands? Does forming and disposing of these Things argue nothing?

Since the Flood the Earth is more barren, and Vegetables afford not a sufficient Support for Mankind. ----- So that if the Lives of all these are of less Consequence, nay, are freely given by him whose they are, they may be taken and used as Food: If they *may* be taken, any may make a Business of taking them for the Supply of others.

But if this be innocent as Business, some may still scruple it as Diversion.

And why not all Diversion with as good Reason? The grave and judicious Mr. *Perkins* says, * "We are allowed to use "the Creatures of God, not only for our Necessity, but for "meet and convenient Delight. This is a confessed Truth. "And therefore to them who shall condemn fit and conveni-"ent Recreation (as some of the ancient Fathers have done, "by Name *Chrysostom* and *Ambrose*) it may be said, be not "too righteous, be not too wise, *Eccl.* vii. 16." But if we consider, that the End of Business and Diversion are the same, we shall clearly conceive the Truth. The End of both are the Refreshment and Support of Man in the Service of God. If I may eat them for Refreshment, I may as well catch them, if this recreate and refresh me. It's as lawful to delight the Eye, as the Palate. All Pleasure arises from the Suitableness and Agreableness between the perceptive Faculties, and the Objects that affect them: And our bountiful Maker, as he has given the animal Life many perceptive Faculties, the Senses of Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, *&c.* so he has provided suitable Objects for all these Faculties, and does allow us to gratify ourselves therewith.

When the Body has been long wearied with Labour, or the Mind weakned with Devotion, it's requisite to give them Ease; then the use of innocent and moderate Pleasures and Recreations is both useful and necessary, to Soul and Body; it enlivens Nature, recruits our Spirits, and renders us more able to set about

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* *See his Works*, Vol. 2. p. 140.

ſerious Buſineſs and Employment. For to intermix no Gratifications, nor Diverſions with our more ſerious Affairs, makes the Mind unactive, dull and uſeleſs. ‡

† " It proceeds either from Pride, ill Nature or Hypo-" criſy, when People cenſure and are offended at the Liber-" ties which others uſe in thus relaxing their Minds. Sloth and Idleneſs, we have already inveigh'd againſt, and condemn'd ; but thoſe who give ſeaſonable Hours for their Devotions and know how to diſpatch the proper Buſineſs of Life well and ſeaſonably enough, and ſtill aim chiefly at the Glory of God, need be under no Apprehenſions of the divine Wrath and Diſpleaſure on the Score of their Diverſions. For this is *good* and *comely*, Eccl. v. 18. And indeed, the Comforts and Enjoyments of this Life, which we receive from the bountiful Hand of God, is a great Subject of our Praiſe and Thankſgiving to God, ------*that the Lines are fallen to us in pleaſant Places*, ----*our Heads anointed, our Cup running over*. The Steams lead us up to the Fountain and Spring-Head. Our Diverſion, if rightly uſed, not only fits us for, but leads us to Devotion ; and the Creature brings us to Chriſt. Thus in the Context, the Diſciples go a fiſhing, and Chriſt manifeſts himſelf to them.-----Not only countenances them, by ſucceeding their Deſign,

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‡ Cito rumpes arcum ſi tenſum habueris.
At ſi laxâris, cum voles, eris utilis,
Sic luſus Animo debet aliquand dari,
Ad cogitandum melior, ut redeat tibi.
------ ------ ------ ------ Study and eaſe
Together mixt; Sweet Recreation,
And Innocence, which moſt does pleaſe,
with Meditation.

† The Phariſees were of this Temper and frequently cenſure and condemn CHRIST for his Recreations, both for the Matter and Manner. *The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they ſay, behold a Man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners.* Math. 11. 19. Luke 7. 34, &c. and Chap. 15. 2. But all Extreams are bad, one leads to another ; thoſe who in this Caſe *Strain at a Gnat*, in another will generally *Swallow a Camel*.

Deſign; but excites and draws out their Affections to him, ſo much that *Simon* could not wait 'till the Veſſel came to Shore, but leapt into the Lake, and ſwam ſwift aſhore, to greet and converſe with his deareſt Lord.

-------That I may not be tedious, I will only lead in your Reflections a Word or two.

Religion is the higheſt Reaſon, and Chriſtianity perfectly ſuited to Man in his preſent State. And as the venerable Judge *Hale* ſays, * "Religion is beſt in its *Simplicity* and *Purity*, "but difficult to be retain'd ſo, without Superſtitions and "Acceſſions; and thoſe do commonly in Time *ſtifle* and "*choak* the *Simplicity* of Religion, unleſs much Care and Circu nſpection be uſed: The Contemporations are ſo many "and ſo cumberſome, that Religion looſeth its *Nature*, or is "ſtrangled by them: Juſt like a Man that hath ſome excellent ſimple Cordial or Spirit, and puts Muſk in it to make "it ſmell ſweet, and Honey to make it taſte pleaſant, and it "may be *Cantharides* to make it look glorious. Indeed by "the Infuſions he hath given it a very fine *Taſte*, *Smell*, and "*Colour*, but yet he hath ſo clogg'd it, and *ſophiſticated* it "with *Superaddition*, that it may be he hath altered the Nature, and deſtroy'd the Vertue of it." Some ſo muffle up Chriſtianity, and make it look ſo melancholy, ſickly and ſowr, that inconſiderate People are apt to dread its Command, as they would the Tyranny of *Sallee-Men*. But

What prodigious Injuſtice is hereby done to the moſt ſacred and excellent Cauſe in the World?

Such zealous, weak, miſtaken Men can't eaſily be perſwaded of the Diſſimilitude there is between *their* Opinion and Practice, and the Doctrine and Behaviour of *Chriſt* and *his Apoſtles*. It were worthy of their diligent Application, to make a critical Attempt of running the Parralel. And they would certainly find their own Lives awkward and disjointed; and their Notions, in this Part, maim'd and defective, and bloated and ſwell'd in that. They would find likewiſe, that they have given themſelves and others a great deal of unneceſſary Fatigue and Perplexity: Wearying themſelves and tormenting others, by making thoſe Things Duties which God never requir'd,

* Contemplations, laſt Part, *p.* 254.

and forbidding thoſe Things which God never prohibited: Perplexing themſelves and all around them with infinite Doubts and Fears, without any Foundation: Leading Men into the moſt looſing Labyrinths, for which there can be no Clue found, but in the Traces of their own maz'd Brain.

Therefore, How needful is it that we be well acquainted with the Scriptures, inform'd in the Religion of Jeſus, conform'd to the Example of Chriſt and his Apoſtles? There we ſhall ſee the Nature and Deſign of Chriſtianity. ----- To bring *Glory to God in the higheſt*, ------ *Peace and Good-will to Men.* That God's Glory and his Good-----his Duty and Intereſt---Piety and Pleaſure, can never be ſundered.

He will find, that in order to an Action's being term'd really religious, the Principle from which, and the End for which it is done, is much more to be conſidered, than whether it commonly fall under the Denomination of Devotion, Buſineſs, or Diverſion; for they are all at one Time or other our Duty: And the doing our Duty from a good Principle and for a right End, muſt be term'd religious acting. Eating and Drinking are natural and ſenſible Actions, but when *we eat* and *drink* to the *Glory of God*, they are to be conſidered as religious, 1 *Cor.* x. 31. and that not only when Men eat and drink the meaneſt for Quality, and the leaſt for Quantity that can ſupport them in the Service of God and Society; but when they have a rich and plentiful Collation: As at *Cana* of *Galilee*, they had a Plenty of rich Wines miraculouſly provided by Chriſt himſelf, who made one of the Company at this chearful Entertainment. This was at a Wedding, which is not every Day. " No Man " ſhould make Sports his Buſineſs, nor Paſtimes his Employ- " ment, no more than Cordials his Drink, or Sauces his Meat." This deſtroys the very Notion of Diverſion. Says Mr. *Lock*, " Some Men may be ſaid never to divert themſelves, they " can't *turn aſide from Buſineſs*, for they never do any." *To every Thing there is a Seaſon*, Eccl. iii. 1,---4.

Should we not always in every Enterprize wiſh for the Preſence and Bleſſing of Chriſt? Methinks thoſe who love and adore the bleſſed Jeſus, ſhould deſire to ſee him every where, and in every Thing! who calls for our Devotion and allows our Diverſion! who procured Peace and Pleaſure for wretched ſinful Men! Don't I owe a *grateful Senſe* of the Grace and Favour of my Benefactor, in the Enjoyment of every Bleſſing?

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This gives a Gust to every Enjoyment, our tasting the Sweetness of Christ in them. -----We consider him as Mediator of the Covenant of Grace, and when we see every Thing convey'd from God to us by him, then we have a real Relish for them----. There is no suitable solid Satisfaction in any temporal Good, but as the Gift of God thro' Christ. This every good Man, in a good Frame finds and feels-----. "Business "and Diversions, Cities and Palaces, with their various Or- "naments; Fields and Groves; Spring, Summer, and Au- "tumn, with all their flowry Beauties and tasteful Blessings, "are some of the Delights of the Sons of Men. Books and "Learning, and polite Company, and refin'd Science, are "the more elegant Joys of ingenious Spirits: These are en- "ticing Gratifications of the Senses or the Mind of Man; "they are all innocent in themselves, they may be sanctified "to divine Purposes, and afford double Satisfaction if God "be among them: But if God be absent, if he hide his Face "or frown upon the Soul, not Palaces, nor Groves, nor Fields, "nor Business, nor Diversion, nor all the flowry or tasteful "Blessings of Spring or Summer, nor the more refin'd Joys "of Books and Learning, and elegant Company; not all the "rich Provision of Nature and Art, can entertain or refresh, "can satisfy or please the Soul of a Christian----------when "smitten with the Love of God.

To conclude, Let us ever remember that *we* and *all we have*, is God's, and that we are accountable to him for our Improvement of all, and depend on Christ for our Acceptance with him in all.

A M E N.

YE happy Fields, unknown to
Noiſe and Strife,

The kind Rewarders of in-
duſtrious Life ;

Ye ſhady Woods where once I us'd to rove,

To think for Men, and praiſe the God
above ;

Ye murmuring Streams that in Meanders
roll,

The ſweet Compoſers of the penſive Soul,

Farewell.---The City calls me from your
Bowers ;

Farewell amuſing Tho'ts and peaceful
Hours.